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ABSTRACT

A study investigated the attitudes normal and disabled readers have toward reading to determine if differences existed between the two groups. Subjects, 40 normal readers and 40 students from remedial classes in grades 3 through 6, each completed the Estes Attitude scale. The results indicated a significant difference in attitudes toward reading between normal and disabled readers: 35 of the normal readers had positive attitudes toward reading, while 28 of the disabled readers had positive attitudes. Specific findings indicated that disabled readers, more than normal readers, considered reading to be boring and for learning rather than for enjoyment. (FL)

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ATTITUDES TOWARD READING OF THE DISABLED READER AND THE NORMAL READER

by

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Accepted 4/15/83 (RC) [signature]

Submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirements of
The Master of Arts Degree in Education
at Kean College of New Jersey
April 1983

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the attitudes normal readers and disabled readers have toward reading and to determine any differences between the two groups.

The subjects included forty normal readers and forty disabled readers from grades three through six. The Stanford Achievement Passage Comprehension Subtest scores were obtained for each student to determine a normal or disabled reader. The Estes Attitude Scale was administered to the eighty students and scored to determine positive or negative readers.

The results indicated that there was a significant difference in attitudes toward reading among the normal and disabled readers. Mean scores, standard deviations, and t-tests were computed and proved that certain items on the opinionaire revealed a greater significant difference between the two groups than other items. In concluding, there was a greater number of negative readers and less positive readers among the disabled readers group than among the normal readers group.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my thanks to the principals of the schools, teachers, and students who were involved in this study, for their sincere cooperation.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Developing positive reading attitudes in students in the elementary grades is an important issue for all teachers to be aware of. According to authorities in the field of reading attitudes, the child develops his own personal attitudes of the reading process at an early age. This attitude, positive or negative in nature, may be a contributing factor in the achievement of reading skills of the child.

A survey was conducted whereby classroom teachers were asked the question, "What is reading?" Based on the definitions received, the conclusion pointed to the fact that most classroom teachers need to aquire a better understanding of the reading concept.[1] Jerry L. Johns' classroom experiences with children in grades four through six revealed that they, like the teachers in the above mentioned survey, had very little understanding of reading.[2]

These studies can conclude that the child's personal attitudes and beliefs of reading rely on how the teacher perceives reading and portrays it to the students.

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[1] R. G. Stauffer, Directed Reading Maturity as a Cognitive Process (Harper and Row, New York, 1969) p. 5

[2] Jerry L. Johns, "Reading: A View from the Child", The Reading Teacher, April 1970, p. 647

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Do the attitudes and behavior toward reading of the disabled reader and the normal reader in grades three through six differ?

SIGNIFICANCE OF PROBLEM

Because reading is the key to all other academic areas, it is of great importance that the child develop a positive attitude toward reading. Favorable attitudes in other academic areas, personal and social adjustment are other factors to be considered, or the result may be a disabled reader who fosters a negative attitude.

Today's educators of young children must be understanding and offer guidance and motivational techniques to their students in order to avoid a negative attitude toward reading which may develop in their later years.

Knowing which students have high attitudes despite achievement level scores will help teachers take care to provide opportunity for these students to do free reading despite time pressures, and knowing which students read only to achieve a goal will help teachers and librarians focus on locating the right books to stimulate these youngsters to read more.[3]

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[3]Doris Roettger, "Elementary Students' Attitudes Toward Reading", The Reading Teacher, January 1980, p. 453

PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this research is to investigate the attitudes and behaviors toward reading of the disabled reader and the normal reader in grades three through six and to conclude if they differ.

ASSUMPTIONS

It is assumed that the students responding to the reading attitude opinionaire will answer the items honestly. It is also assumed that the results of this study will be significant in determining if there is a difference in attitudes toward reading of the disabled reader and the normal reader.

LIMITATIONS

The amount of time alloted for research and the population sampled places a limit on this study.

DELIMITATIONS

Since this study is an investigation concerning the attitudes of middle-class pupils in grades three through six, other socio-economic populations and pupils in grades one and two and beyond the sixth grade will not be included in the research.

DEFINITIONS

Disabled reader: A child of intellectual capability who has failed to grow in reading, and is one or more years below age-grade expectancy.

Normal reader: A child who is reading commensurate with grade level.

Attitude: How an individual feels or what they believe is an attitude. It may be positive or negative in nature.[4]

Opinionaire: The information form that attempts to measure the attitude or belief of an individual.[5]

STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESIS

There is a significant difference in attitudes and behavior toward reading of the disabled reader and the normal reader.

SUMMARY

This chapter has attempted to point out the importance of both the teacher and the students' knowledge of what reading consists of. Studies have shown that in most cases students with a negative attitude toward reading aquired a poor understanding of reading. The teacher's role is essential to motivate the students, therefore making reading an exciting and meaningful activity.

A. Sterl Artley[6] concluded from research interviews with older students that their teachers planned very little to promote a genuine interest in reading. Drill books, basal readers, and phonic work books were the only means of reading

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[4]John W. Best, Research in Education, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1981), p. 179

[5]Ibid, p. 182

[6]A. Sterl Artley, "Good Teachers of Reading - Who are They?", The Reading Teacher, October 1975, p. 27

instruction. These children could have been enlightened with many other techniques such as, audio-visual aids, dramatizations, games, and puzzles to name a few that all relate to the reading process. Perhaps then, these students would have had a more positive attitude of reading therefore possibly resulting in a higher achievement.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

As discussed in Chapter I, all teachers, especially in elementary grades, should be concerned about developing positive reading attitudes in their students for the reason of avoiding possible low achievement reading skills. In this chapter the importance and utilization of reading attitudes will be discussed in more detail; various techniques in measuring attitudes, and conclusions of these measurements by investigative authorities will also be areas of concern.

Ken L. Dulin pointed out that "probably the primary reason most of us in the field of reading are so eager to develop strong, positive attitudes toward reading in our students is simply because we feel this is a good thing to do."[1] Dulin's quote clarifies the point that teachers of reading should pass on to their students a generally good feeling about reading, and hope that they will aquire a pleasurable and positive attitude.

IMPORTANCE OF READING ATTITUDES

Attitudes, along with interest, motivation, locus of control, self-concept, feelings and emotions are included in what researchers in education refer to as affective concerns.

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[1]Ken L. Dulin, "Reading and the Affective Domain", Aspects of Reading Education, Susanna Pflaum, Editor (McCutcheon Publishing Corporation, California, 1978) p. 109

It is these concerns or behaviors that are important to the reading process because they provide the desire and the will to read.[2]

Affective growth as discussed by Margaret Greer, "should be given as much emphasis as cognitive and physical growth as a goal in education."[3] This theory has been accepted by other authorities in the field of affective growth, such as that of Combs. Combs states, "This area of development is too important to be left to chance or to incidental learnings, for one is a full functional individual only to the extent that all his potentials for growth are met."[4]

Children's thinking processes and their attitudes toward reading are of central importance for the reading teacher, according to John Downing.[5] It has been noted by many authorities on pupil's reading attitudes that in the past not much has been researched or published on just how important it is for the reading teacher to consider the child's feelings or thinking processes. Jessie Reid, at the University of

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[2]J. Estill Alexander and Ronald C. Filler as cited by Anthony D. Fredericks in "Developing Positive Reading Attitudes", The Reading Teacher, October 1982, p. 38

[3]Margaret Greer, "Affective Growth Through Reading", The Reading Teacher, January 1972, p. 340

[4]Combs, A. W. as cited by Margaret Greer, "Affective Growth Through Reading", The Reading Teacher, January 1972, p. 341.

[5]John Downing, "How Children Think About Reading", The Reading Teacher, December 1969, p. 217

Edinburgh, Scotland, has conducted an investigation of five-year-old childrens' concepts of reading. Her conclusions indicated that these young children had a vague insight of the usefulness and importance of reading.[6] Reid's study seems to support Downing's views that the teacher is responsible for providing the students with an understanding and purpose for reading, especially for young beginners.

The study of achievement, as in the achievement of standardized tests in evaluating a pupil's progress, has been widely accepted nation-wide. However, according to authorities on pupil attitudes such as Askov and Fischbach, the measurement of attitudes can also be an important variable in evaluating pupils.[7]

THE MEASUREMENT OF READING ATTITUDES

Individual Pupil Interviews as Conducted by: Jerry L. Johns, 1972

Jerry L. Johns developed a study of 103 fourth and fifth grade children based on one question, "What is reading?"[8] Each child's response was recorded on tape so it could later be analyzed and classified into one of five catagories;

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[6]Jessie Reid, as cited by John Downing in "Affective Growth Through Reading", The Reading Teacher, January 1972, p. 219

[7]Eunice N. Askov and Thomas J. Fischbach, "An Investigation of Primary Pupils' Attitudes Toward Reading", The Journal of Experimental Education, Spring 1973, p. 1

[8]Jerry L. Johns, "Concepts of Reading Among Good and Poor Readers", Education, Volume 95, Fall 1974, pp. 58-60

Catagory 1: non-meaningful responses such as, "I don't know" or other vague responses; Catagory 2: also a non-meaningful catagory if the child responded in the manner that reading involved a classroom procedure; Catagory 3: meaningful if the child voiced the opinion of reading as word recognition such as, "saying words"; Catagory 4: meaningful response if the child considered reading as understanding; Catagory 5: meaningful response if the child referred to reading as word recognition and meaning.

The Gates-MacGinite Reading Test was later administered by Johns. Only the comprehension subtest was used in his study to conclude if there was a correlation between childrens' concepts of reading and their reading achievement.

Mikulecky Behavioral Reading Attitude Measure

Ken L. Dulin refers to the Mikulecky Behavioral Reading Attitude Measure as "the best".[9] This measurement consists of a twenty item paper-and-pencil inventory based on Krathwohl's Taxonomy of the Affective Domain. This taxonomy covers five different stages in the development of an attitude, with the progression of these stages running from psychologically "outside" the individual to "inside" the individual.[10] These stages are: attending, responding, valuing, organization, and

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[9]Ken L. Dulin, "Reading and the Affective Domain", as found in Aspects of Reading Education, Susanna Pflaum-Connor, Editor (McCutcheon Publishing Corporation, 1978) p. 114

[10]Dulin, p. 114

characterization. This model has also been noted, by its developer, to be a useful mental test because of its hierarchial format. The teacher, therefore, need not use the scoring instrument.

Estes Attitude Scale

The Estes Attitude Scale is the instrument to be used in this research paper with grades three through six. It has been referred to by authorities as the "Likert" or "summated ratings" type. Such a scale is composed of a list of twenty statements to each of which the examinee is asked to respond on a one to five point scale varying from "I strongly agree" to "I strongly disagree". Each of the statements in this scale was worded in such a way as to call to mind the subject of reading. A summation of the values of each students' responses on the scale will "yield a quantitative representation of his attitude toward reading."[11] Some of the statements are positive and some negative. Responses to these items will differ in value when the use of the scoring table is utilized.

According to Beverly Dryden, this scale can be used for the measurement of attitudes with grades three through twelve.[12]

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[11] Thomas H. Estes, "A Scale to Measure Attitudes Toward Reading", Journal of Reading, November 1971, pp. 135-138

[12] Beverly J. Dryden, "Characteristics of Group Self-Reporting Reading Attitude Instruments for Elementary Grades", Reading Improvement, Spring 1981, p. 4

Seiler and Hough, 1970 stated that, "The Estes scale design is probably the most efficient paper-and-pencil method for assessing attitudes, and provides the most reliable measure with the least items."[13]

Primary Pupil Reading Attitude Inventory - Askov

The Primary Pupil Reading Attitude Inventory can be used to measure reading attitudes with children in grades one through three. The format consists of thirty paired comparison pictures because "the use of pictures, rather than oral statements, seem to be appealing to young children."[14] When administering the test, the child is asked to choose between a picture of a child reading and one where a child is enjoying a favorite recreational activity. Distractors involving a choice between two recreational activities serve a purpose in this test. Although the child is given thirty choices, only eighteen of them involve reading. A score of 18, which is the highest possible score, indicates the child chooses reading over other activities. The score 0 represents the lowest possible score.

Children's Attitude Toward Reading Test - Redelheim

Redelheim developed the Children's Attitude Toward Reading

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[13]Seiler and Hough, 1970, as found in "Characteristics of Group Self-Reporting Reading Attitude Instruments for Elementary Grades", Beverly J. Dryden, Reading Improvement, Spring 1981, p. 6

[14]Eunice N. Askov and Thomas J. Fischbach, "An Investigation of Primary Pupil's Attitudes Toward Reading", The Journal of Experimental Education, Volume 41, Spring 1973, pp. 1-7

Test, or otherwise known as CHART. This test is to be used with the K-2 grades. Photographs of a variety of reading related activities, including both instructional and recreational make up the format. These photographs were printed through a fifty percent screen, resulting in a dotted, ambigious fashion. The child is to respond to the pictures as if he/she were in them.[15]

Primary and Intermediate Scale of Reading Attitudes -Heathington

Heathington developed two separate scales to measure reading attitudes of children. The Primary Scale is intended for use with the 1-3 grade level, and The Intermediate Scale is to be used with the 4-6 grades. Both scales measure two dimensions of attitudes: recreational and instructional, and utilize the same five-point Likert scale design as used in Estes model. The Primary Scale consists of twenty items, and The Intermediate Scale uses twenty four items. Another feature both scales use is oral presentation of the items by the examiner as opposed to the written format. Heathington feels that the reading ability of first through sixth grade students is not fully developed for them to independently read all the statements in the assessment, therefore this resulted in the oral presentation

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[15]Paul S. Redelheim, "A Multidimensional Test of Reading Attitudes for Children", The Reading Teacher, November 1976, pp. 181-182

response format.[16]

Bullen Reading Attitude Measure

Bullen has created two attitude measurements for grades one through three and four through six. Both forms measure recreational and instructional attitudes toward reading, with a paired comparison response format. The differences between the two separate instruments is the number of items and the type of format. The grade one through three test uses fifteen pictures, while the four through six test form uses twenty four paired words. There is only one answer which will determine if the reader fosters a positive or a negative attitude.[17]

The San Diego Inventory of Reading Attitude

This reading attitude instrument is used with grades one through six. It measures recreational and instructional attitudes of the reader involved. A twenty five item opinionaire format requires the pupil to read independently and answer each item with a yes/no choice. Although this type of measurement has been in use since its development in 1961, limitations have been placed on it for the fact that the pupil

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[16]Heathington, as found in "Characteristics of Group Self-Reporting Reading Attitude Instruments for Elementary Grades", Reading Improvement, Spring 1981, p. 4

[17]Beverly Dryden, "Characteristics of Group Self-Reporting Reading Attitude Instruments for Elementary Grades", Reading Improvement, Spring 1981, p. 4

is locked into a forced choice of yes or no and he/she cannot indicate degrees of agreement.[18]

The Measurement of Eight Dimensions of Reading Attitudes

In the development of a new scale to measure intermediate grade children's reading attitudes, a study was done in 1977 by Fred H. Wallbrown and his collegues to investigate the reading attitudes of 159 fifth and 156 sixth graders from a rural area in Ohio. Wallbrown's survey was designed to measure eight dimensions of reading attitude. They are: Expression of Reading Difficulty, Reading as Direct Reinforcement, Reading as Enjoyment, Alternate Learning Modes, Reading Group, Reading Anxiety, Silent vs. Oral Reading, and Comics. The Survey, as it was labeled by Wallbrown, was determined to be "relatively reliable for the rural students included in the study. Scores from the Survey always should be considered in the context of a child's emotional adjustment, family situation, reading skills, and academic aptitude. Scores from the Survey may be treated as one legitimate source of information about a child. The scores are also reliable enough to be used to make inferences about the reading attitudes of groups of children."[19]

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[18] Dryden, p. 5

[19] Fred H. Wallbrown, "Normative Data and Reliability Estimates for Eight Dimensions of Reading Attitude", Psychology in the Schools, Volume 18, July 1981, pp. 272-273

The question of validity has been brought up by authorities of affective scales. Joseph L. Vaughn, Jr.[20] discusses that teachers and researchers should not rely upon publications and disseminations as evidence of the validity of scales. Instead, primary sources, such as educators at the university level, or even the communication with the original creator of the attitude scales should be taken into consideration when seeking the validity of these instruments. Vaughn also points out that, "the validity of results is dependent upon the validity of the scales that generate those results."[21]

FINDINGS

A. Sterl Artley

A. Sterl Artley developed a study involving one hundred college junior and senior education majors. They were asked what they could recall of their own reading experiences in grade school. Three questions were developed by Artley which the student responded to in written form: 1. What did your teachers do to promote your competence or interest in reading? 2. Was there anything that your teachers did that detracted from your interest in reading?, 3. Was there someone or something besides your teacher who contributed to your competence and interest in reading?[22]

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[20]Joseph L. Vaughn, Jr., "Affective Measurement Instruments: An Issue of Validity", Journal of Reading, October 1980, p. 18

[21]Vaughn, p. 19

[22]A. Sterl Artley, "Good Teachers of Reading - Who are They?", The Reading Teacher, October 1975, p. 26

Artley concluded from his study that many of these students' teachers did not play a significant role in developing a positive attitude toward the reading process. In fact, most students had recalled that they were over-drilled on the process of reading and very little had been done by the teacher to promote reading as an exciting and rewarding activity. Artley points out that it is important for the teacher to offer creative reading techniques and enthusiasm in order to develop a positive reading attitude in the students. Also emphasized is the important role the librarian and the home environment play on the success of the student.[23]

Doris Roettger

Roettger's study involved 75 fourth, fifth, and sixth grade student's attitudes toward reading. The Estes Attitude Scale was implemented, and scores revealed that students who read well had a negative attitude, while those who read poorly had a positive attitude. An orally administered interview followed because the investigator was interested in finding out how the students felt about reading and why they felt as they did. The responses revealed that those children possessing a high attitude/low performance viewed reading as a tool to gain success in a job; they "felt good" about reading. On the other hand, those with a low attitude/high performance felt reading was a way to attain good grades in school. Both groups, however, felt time should be set aside in school for

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[23]Artley, p. 31

reading books of their own choice. Perhaps, with this in mind, Roettger points out, "the teacher and the librarian can help the students choose books that will stimulate them to read more."[24]

Eunice N. Askov and Thomas J. Fischbach

During the 1968-9 school year, Askov and Fischbach administered The Primary Pupil Reading Inventory to 94 first and third grade pupils. This type of inventory was designed to evaluate the child's attitude toward reading by using pictures rather than oral statements. The format consists of thirty paired comparisons, however, only eighteen of them involve reading.

Several variables were included in the study to be discussed by the investigators, they were: the attitude toward reading and achievement, sex, and grade placement. The stability of attitude scores over a period of time was also studied. Results indicated that attitude was significantly related to Paragraph Meaning but not to Word Meaning subtests of the Stanford Achievement Tests. Attitude scores were found to be significantly higher for girls than boys. Grade level was not significantly related to attitude. Attitude scores remained stable from spring to fall.[25]

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[24]Doris Roettger, "Elementary Student's Attitudes Toward Reading", Reading Teacher, Volume 33, January 1980, pp. 451-458

[25]Eunice N. Askov and Thomas J. Fischbach, "An Investigation of Primary Pupil's Attitudes Toward Reading", The Journal of Experimental Education, Volume 41, Spring 1973, pp. 1-7

Jerry L. Johns

The purpose of Johns's study in 1972 was to investigate and compare the concepts of reading of children defined as "good" readers, and "poor" readers according to comprehension grade equivalent scores on the Gates-MacGinite Reading Comprehension Subtest. The study was composed of 53 fourth grade children and 50 fifth grade children from a middle to upper-middle class community. All 103 children were interviewed and recorded on tape individually. They were asked to express themselves honestly when asked, "What is reading?" Johns later analyzed their answers putting them into categories he defined as meaningful or nonmeaningful responses. The results supported Johns's hypothesis that a significantly greater number of meaningful definitions of reading are given by students who are identified as good readers.[26] When Johns completed his study he considered several issues he thought should be explored further: 1. What should be included as a meaningful concept of reading?, 2. How should interviews be conducted?, 3. What criteria should be used in labeling a reader as "good" or "poor"?[27]

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[26]Jerry L. Johns, "Concepts of Reading Among Good and Poor Readers", Education, Volume 95, Fall 1974, p. 58

[27]Johns, p. 60

Charles Bruckerhoff

Bruckerhoff conducted a study in 1976 involving 191 high school students from various content areas including vocational and special education. His procedure involved the administration of Artley's three question opinionaire designed to probe into the student's feelings about reading. When the responses to the questions were analyzed, Bruckerhoff came to the following conclusions: a difference was noticeable in the quantity and quality of answers, students in the more academic subjects responded to each question with several experiences as opposed to students enrolled in vocational classes who responded rather briefly and vague, the first two questions for all students showed that they had some statement to make concerning what teachers and others did to contribute to their good or bad feelings about reading, and the third question revealed that the students in the academic classes were motivated with reading at home with a close relative, whereas the students in the vocational classes expressed that they were not influenced or very little of stress on reading was found in the home.[28]

Bruckerhoff continued to discuss from his study that "A number of instructional practices have an equally deleterious effect on the student's interest and competence in reading."[29]

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[28]Charles Bruckerhoff, "What do Students Say About Reading Instruction?", The Clearing House, Volume 51, November 1977, p. 105

[29]Bruckerhoff, p. 107

Also noted was that the home environment plays an important role in reading attitudes, the content and implementation of school curriculums may need to be adjusted in order to instill a positive feeling in the students toward the worthwhileness of reading.

Paul S. Redelheim

The administration of the first Children's Attitude Toward Reading Test (CHART), originated by Redelheim, took place in suburban elementary schools with 166 kindergarten, first, and second grade children.

To test the reliability of his attitude instrument, Redelheim decided to re-test the same group of children one week later. These children were not notified that the re-test would later take place. Conclusions indicated that there was an increase in score stability from kindergarten through the second grade.

Validity was also a considered factor in Redelheim's newly developed test. The teacher's ratings of each student was correlated with the student's self rating in order to establish criterion related validity.

Although the reliability and validity of scores was established, Redelheim concluded that "Reading needs to be defined more broadly if an accurate assessment of student attitude toward reading is to be made."[30]

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[30]Paul S. Redelheim, "A Multidimensional Test of Reading Attitude for Children", The Reading Teacher, November 1976, p. 188

Ann Kirtland Healy

Healy's investigation of three heterogeneous groups of ten-year-old children proved that attitudes toward reading could be changed in an experimental setting. Two plans were implemented: Plan A in which children were allowed to choose reading groups according to interest and selection of various reading materials, and Plan B in which children were placed by Healy into a group according to ability. Plan A showed positive attitudes toward reading in the children, while Plan B had not been able to change the groups' reading attitudes, particularly for those children who had disliked reading at the beginning of the year. Healy also pointed out that "children placed in a combination of small groups for instruction, reading partners, and individualized instruction appeared to also promote positive reading attitudes."[31]

John Downing

Downing is a firm believer that children's thinking processes are of central importance for the reading teacher. He also pointed out that not much has been published in journals or other materials on thinking processes probably because "it is an invisible process."[32]

Downing believes that there should be an adaption of

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[31] Ann Kirkland Healy, "Changing Children's Attitudes Toward Reading", Elementary English, Volume 40, March 1963, pp. 255-257

[32] John Downing, "How Children Think About Reading", The Reading Teacher, Volume 23, December 1969, pp. 217-229

teaching to the child's thinking. He has also been noted to stress the use of i.t.a. as a reading approach in 1969 for five-year-olds with the Early-to-Read series books. He points out that "i.t.a. could be successful if taught in a way adapted to the thinking of younger children."[34]

SUMMARY

To date, publications have attempted to help teachers to understand the necessity of a child's positive attitude toward reading. Authorities in this area have developed instruments with the purpose to measure reading attitudes in hope to utilize the scores for a possible adjustment in teaching styles, thus enhancing positive attitudes. The importance of reliability and validity of these devices have been stressed. Still, recent research indicates that the definition of reading needs to be clarified further if teachers and reseachers continue to measure reading attitudes of children.

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[34]Downing, p. 228

CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will clarify the procedures used in the investigation of the attitudes and behaviors toward reading of the disabled and normal reader in grades three through six. Sources of data, methods of gathering data, and a description of the data gathering instrument will also be discussed.

PROCEDURE

The Estes Reading Attitude Scale is the instrument being used in this study to investigate the attitudes children have toward reading. This Likert-type opinionaire has been validated and referred to by many educators and researchers as one of the most effective and reliable of attitude measuring instruments. Two groups of children, normal readers and disabled readers, are the subjects to be investigated. A conclusion will be made if there is a significant difference in the attitudes toward reading of these two groups of children.

SOURCES OF DATA

The sample involved in this study consists of a total of 80 children from a small suburban school system in a middle to upper-middle class community in grades three through six. According to the reading comprehension subtest grade level scores from the Stanford Achievement Test, forty children were catagorized as normal or average readers and the other forty as

disabled readers who attended remedial reading classes or the resource room.

METHODS OF GATHERING DATA

The approval of the building principal and the staff of teachers involved in this study was the first step taken before any data was gathered.

Authorities in the field of investigating childrens' reading attitudes, such as Doris Roettger, suggest that the use of the comprehension subtest score of a reliable standardized test is one way to choose a sample for an attitude survey.[1] Therefore, the researcher of this study has used the grade equivalent scores from the comprehension subtest of the Stanford Achievement Test given by the school involved to select normal or average readers, who read commensurate with their grade level, and disabled readers who read approximately one year below their grade placement level. Two groups, therefore, were established: the normal or average readers, and the disabled readers. Each group consisted of a total of forty children in grades three through six, ten children from each grade. The group of forty normal readers were placed, accordingly, in the middle reading group by their classroom teachers, while the disabled readers were attending remedial reading classes or the resource room.

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[1]Doris Roettger, "Elementary Students' Attitudes Toward Reading", The Reading Teacher, Volume 33, January 1980, p. 451

When administering the Estes Reading Attitude Scale, the two groups of readers were met at different times and in a different manner. With the approval of the principal and the teachers, a day, time, and room was scheduled for the administration of the attitude scale to the group of forty normal readers. The purpose of the reading attitude scale was explained to these children and it was stressed that they should answer the items as honestly as possible.

The group of forty disabled readers were met in small groups in their remedial reading classes or resource room. These teachers were very cooperative in arranging schedules to allow the researcher to complete this survey. Again, the purpose was discussed for the scale and the importance of honesty stressed. The researcher then proceeded to read each of the twenty items to the examinees as they read along silently. The pupils then responded to the five point choices independently. Both groups were very cooperative during the administration of the attitude scale. The researcher then proceeded to hand score all papers in order to classify each student as a positive or negative reader.

DESCRIPTION OF DATA GATHERING INSTRUMENT

The data gathering instrument used for this study is the Estes Attitude Scale developed by Thomas H. Estes in 1971 for the use of measuring reading attitudes of children in grades three through twelve.

The five point choice format has been referred to by authorities as the "Likert" or "summated ratings" type. The examinee is asked to respond honestly to each of the twenty items pertaining to reading on the five point scale ranging from "I strongly agree" to "I strongly disagree". Some of the statements are worded in a negative manner, while the others are of a positive nature. Responses to these items differ in value when the use of the scoring table is utilized. The score range is stated by Estes as 20-100, with 60 as the mean. A positive attitude ranges from 61-100, while a negative attitude ranges from 20-60. Seiler and Hough stated that, "the Estes Scale design is probably the most efficient paper-and-pencil method for assessing attitudes, and provides the most reliable measure with the least items."[2]

The Estes Attitude Scale was reviewed and approved for use for this particular study by Dr. A. Mazurkiewicz at Kean College. A copy of the scale can be found in the appendix.

SUMMARY

The information derived from the reading attitude instrument was compiled and the results of the findings will be presented and analyzed in the following chapter.

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[2]Seiler and Hough, as found in "Characteristics of Group Self-Reporting Reading Attitude Instruments for Elementary Grades", Beverly J. Dryden, Reading Improvement, Spring 1981, p. 6

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

INTRODUCTION

As the procedures for this study was discussed in Chapter III, this chapter will present the results. A review of the experiment and an explanation of the data, including the items in the opinionaire and the tables will be discussed.

REVIEW OF EXPERIMENT

To investigate the attitudes children have toward reading, a Likert-type opinionaire, the Estes Reading Attitude Scale was administered. Two groups of children were selected according to the passage comprehension scores on the Stanford Achievement Test to determine who was the normal reader (a child who reads at grade level) or a disabled reader (a child who reads approximately one year below grade level). Forty students in grades three through six from each group, totalling eighty, met with the researcher, who administered the scale and read each item to the students in order to avoid any misunderstandings. The group of normal readers were met with at one meeting, whereas the disabled readers were met with in small groups in their remedial reading classes or resource rooms. The importance of honesty in responding to the items on the opinionaire was stressed with both groups. Completed opinionaires were hand-scored and each student was classified according to Estes' scale as a positive or negative reader.

Following the scoring of each opinionaire, a tallying up of responses for each item from each group was completed and is presented in the appendix. Two tables are presented in this chapter and will be fully discussed in the following section. Table I is labeled The Mean, Standard Deviation and T-Test Attitude Scores for all the subjects included in this study; and Table II presents the percentages of agreement to the statements on the Estes Attitude Scale.

EXPLANATION OF DATA

The Estes Attitude Scale, the instrument used for this study to measure childrens' attitudes toward reading, consists of twenty statements, eight of which are positively worded and twelve negative. The positive items are numbers 2, 5, 7, 10, 14, 15, 18, and 19. The negative items are numbers 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, and 20. If the respondent has a positive attitude toward reading, he would check "strongly agree" to positive items, and "strongly disagree" to negative items.

Table I shows the mean attitude scores for each item on the opinionaire for all students, normal and disabled readers, the standard deviations, and the t for those items where a high mean score difference was also recorded. The most

Table I MEAN ATTITUDE SCORES, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, t-TEST RESULTS ON SELECTED MEANS FOR NORMAL AND DISABLED READERS

Statement	Normal Reader Mean	S.D.	Disabled Reader Mean	S.D.	t-Score
1.	3.85	1.85	3.00	1.40	3.80<.01
2.	2.53	1.26	2.25	1.17	
3.	4.35	.92	3.78	1.38	2.35<.05
4.	4.15	.86	3.35	1.39	3.13<.01
5.	1.8	1.11	1.95	1.30	
6.	3.85	1.16	3.32	1.42	2.12<.05
7.	2.78	1.31	2.67	1.56	
8.	4.47	1.01	3.63	1.43	
9.	3.95	1.06	3.65	1.12	
10.	2.50	1.32	2.40	1.34	
11.	3.38	1.27	2.80	1.52	2.34<.05
12.	3.72	1.28	2.88	1.26	3.69<.01
13.	4.42	1.00	3.38	1.33	3.47<.01
14.	2.20	1.29	2.28	1.43	4.74<.01
15.	1.67	1.02	2.30	1.22	2.79<.01
16.	4.60	.84	4.02	1.19	2.68<.01
17.	3.55	1.40	3.48	1.24	
18.	2.77	1.42	3.25	1.56	
19.	2.37	1.37	2.70	1.44	
20.	3.75	1.45	3.42	1.36	

prominent mean difference found among the positively worded items was number 15. Item 15 states, "There are many books which I hope to read." According to the raw data, thirty one normal readers either "strongly agreed" or "agreed" with this statement, while only twenty one disabled readers responded this way. The mean difference is .63, which proved to be statistically significant at the .01 level according to the t (2.79<.01). Item 14, "There should be more time for free reading during the school day", revealed a .7 mean score difference between the normal and disabled readers. This item proved to be of significant difference when a t-Score was computed (4.74<.01).

Among the negatively worded items, the difference between the means of the two samples on 13, 14, 15 and 16 all proved to be of statistically significant. Item 1, "Reading is for learning but not for enjoyment", showed only seven normal readers either "strongly agreeing" or "agreeing" with this statement, while sixteen of the disabled readers responded this way. The mean score difference was calculated at .85, which revealed a significant t (3.80<.01). Item 12, "Most books are too long and dull", revealed eight normal readers either strongly agreeing or agreeing with this statement as compared to fifteen disabled readers responding this way. A mean score difference between the two groups was .85, the statistical significance of what was 3.69<.01. Item 4, "Books are a bore", revealed twelve "strongly agree" or "agree" responses from the disabled readers group, whereas only two normal readers responded in the same way. The results indicate a .80 mean difference, significant at the .01 level (3.13<.01). Item 16 revealed a .58 mean difference between the normal and disabled readers' responses to "Books should not be read except for class requirements", where seventeen disabled readers answered "strongly disagree" as compared to thirty normal readers' responses. The difference in responses showed significant mean score difference with a t being 2.35<.05 and 2.12<.05. Item 11 also revealed a statistically significant difference between the normal and disabled readers' responses. "Reading becomes boring after about an hour" showed only ten

normal readers "strongly agreeing" or "agreeing" with this statement while twenty disabled readers responded this way. The t revealed that this difference was significant below the .05 level (2.34<.05).

The most prominent mean score difference among both the negatively worded items and the positively worded items was item 13, "Free reading doesn't teach anything." This item was revealed in the raw data a total of thirty four "disagree/ strongly disagree" responses from the disabled readers group. This item showed that there was a mean score difference of 1.00 between the two groups, with a t of 3.47<.01.

Table II reveals the percentages of agreement to each statement on the Estes Attitude Scale. The catagories of

Table II PERCENTAGES OF AGREEMENT TO STATEMENTS OF THE ESTES ATTITUDE SCALE

CODE: SA = Strongly Agree/Agree
SD = Strongly Disagree/Disagree
U = Undecided

	Normal Readers			Disabled Readers		
Statement	SA	SD	U	SA	SD	U
1.	17.5%	72.5%	10%	45%	40%	15%
2.	50%	15%	35%	67.5%	15%	17.5%
3.	5%	87.5%	7.5%	20%	70%	10%
4.	5%	80%	15%	30%	50%	20%
5.	82.5%	10%	7.5%	72.5%	15%	12.5%
6.	12.5%	65%	22.5%	30%	57.5%	12.5%
7.	37.5%	22.5%	40%	47.5%	27.5%	25%
8.	5%	87.5%	7.5%	25%	62.5%	12.5%
9.	5%	67.5%	27.5%	12.5%	62.5%	25%
10.	47.5%	20%	32.5%	55%	20%	25%
11.	25%	50%	25%	52.5%	35%	12.5%
12.	20%	65%	15%	37.5%	30%	32.5%
13.	7.5%	85%	7.5%	22.5%	52.5%	25%
14.	60%	15%	25%	62.5%	25%	12.5%
15.	77.5%	5%	17.5%	52.5%	15%	32.5%
16.	2.5%	90%	7.5%	12.5%	80%	7.5%
17.	25%	52.5%	22.5%	20%	55%	25%
18.	42.5%	25%	32.5%	37.5%	50%	12.5%
19.	60%	20%	20%	52.5%	30%	17.5%
20.	17.5%	62.5%	20%	25%	52.5%	22.5%

"strongly agree" and "agree" were considered as one catagory as was "strongly disagree" and "disagree". The "undecided" responses were included as a separate single catagory. In general, the "strongly agree/agree", and the "disagree/strongly disagree" catagories both revealed more percentage differences between the normal and disabled reader than the "undecided" catagory. In the "strongly agree/agree" catagory, items 1, 4, 11, and 15 revealed a percentage difference between the normal and disabled readers' responses ranging from 25%-35%. The "undecided" catagory, as previously mentioned, was not a significant catagory when comparing the differences between the normal and disabled readers' responses. The differential percentages for this catagory ranged from 0%-18.5%.

When a total reading attitude score was developed from each students' opinionaire, it was found that there were thirty five positive and five negative readers among the normal readers group and twenty eight positive and twelve negative readers among the disabled readers group.

SUMMARY

When considering mean scores, t tests of statistical significance, and percentages, the results of this study as revealed in this chapter raise interesting questions about childrens' attitudes toward reading. The following chapter will discuss the conclusions.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

INTRODUCTION

The results obtained for this study suggest conclusions about how children feel toward reading. This chapter will discuss these conclusions, including principle findings, recommendations for further research, and implications for reading.

RESTATEMENT OF PROBLEM

A research study was conducted among forty normal readers and forty disabled readers in grades three through six to investigate the attitude and behavior differences toward reading.

PRINCIPLE FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The study supported the hypothesis that attitudes toward reading of the normal and disabled reader differ. The results revealed that a total of thirty five of forty normal readers have a positive reading attitude, whereas the forty disabled readers had a total of twenty eight positive readers among that population. There were five negative readers among the normal readers as opposed to twelve negative readers among the disabled readers.

Item one on the Estes Attitude Scale revealed that there was a significant difference in the views of the disabled readers and normal readers when responding to the statement, "Reading is for learning but not for enjoyment." A greater number of disabled readers than normal readers agreed with this state-

ment. A Sterl Artley's study on junior and senior education major's past experiences as young students, revealed that their elementary teachers placed more emphasis on the development of reading skills than the promotion of growth through reading or the enjoyment.[1] It has been discussed and emphasized by many educational authorities that reading should not be made a chore for the child, instead interesting and enjoyable reading activities should be integrated into the reading curriculum with the intention to motivate each child.

When considering free reading, most students agreed there should be more time in the school day to read what interests them. In a recent study of children's attitudes toward reading in the elementary grades, Doris Roettger noted that free reading time was the most frequent response among the population she studied.[2]

A significant number of disabled readers than normal readers felt that reading, in general, is a boring or dull task. The fifth and sixth grade readers, in particular, were among the largest population who responded to reading in such a negative manner. Jerry L. John's extensive studies revealed that perhaps the reason for a child to feel negatively toward

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[1]A. Sterl Artley, "Good Teachers of Reading - Who are They?" The Reading Teacher, October 1975, p. 28

[2]Doris Roettger, "Elementary Student's Attitudes Toward Reading", The Reading Teacher, Volume 33 (January 1980), p. 452

reading, whether it is reading for enjoyment or school oriented, may be that his view or concept of reading is poor.[3] In 1972, John's study revealed that "a significantly greater number of meaningful definitions of reading are given by students who are identified as good readers."[4] His research has raised important questions as to what other techniques can be utilized to probe into the area of children's reading concepts so educators can help students to aquire more positive reading attitudes and therefore, higher reading achievement. John Downing has also reported on how young children think about reading. He states that "children's thinking processes are of central importance for the reading teacher", and that through the use of language experiences and enjoyable activities, the child will aquire the "real purposes of reading and writing."[5]

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Although the completed research reveals the differences in reading attitudes of the normal and disabled reader, several recommendations for further research should be considered. The Estes Attitude Scale has proven to be an effective instrument

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[3]Jerry L. Johns, "Concepts of Reading Among the Good and Poor Readers", Education, Volume 95 (Fall 1974), pp. 58-60

[4]Johns, p. 59

[5]John Downing, "How Children Think About Reading", Elementary English, Volume 40 (March 1963) p. 217

in determining a child's overall reading attitude, however it is just one of the many ways to probe into this area of concern.

This study could have been altered, therefore, adding more data or information on why children think the way they do about reading. As a follow up, individualized interviews could have been conducted with each student who completed the opinionaire. This might have given the researcher a more in-depth insight into each student's reasons for responding the way they did on the opinionaire. Jerry L. Johns[6] has been noted for his effective interviews with children concerning the reading concepts among good and poor readers.

Other variables might have been considered in this study. For example, a child's reading attitude as it relates to reading achievement. The administration of the Estes Attitude Scale at a later date to determine a possible change in attitude over a period of time is another consideration. The relationships between attitude toward reading and achievement, sex, and grade placement could have been investigated as was done in Askov and Fischbach's study during the school year of 1968-89.[7]

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[6]Jerry L. Johns, "Concepts of Reading Among Good and Poor Readers", Education, Volume 95 (Fall 1974) pp. 58-60

[7]Eunice N. Askov and Thomas J. Fischbach, "An Investigation of Primary Pupil's Attitudes Toward Reading", Journal of Experimental Education, Spring 1973, p. 1

IMPLICATIONS FOR READING

Although definite conclusions cannot be drawn on reading attitudes of all children, this study has presented, proved, and discussed that reading attitudes is an important area of concern in education. However, further research should be considered.

SUMMARY

This study has proven that differences in reading attitudes exist among normal and disabled readers in a sample choser by the researcher. The importance of a positive reading attitude was emphasized with the educator and the support given by home as utmost significance. A. Sterl Artley indicated a point of importance for successful teaching:

> "Teachers who sense the importance of reading as a vital force in the development of young people, who see reading as the most important activity that they will carry on during the day, and who are able to convey that conviction through their enthusiasm and creative teaching, produce children who are likely to enjoy reading and hence be efficient readers."[8]

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[8] A. Sterl Artley, "Good Teachers of Reading - Who are They?", The Reading Teacher, October 1975, p. 31

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APPENDIX

RESPONSES TO THE ESTES ATTITUDE SCALE - NORMAL READERS: GRADES 3-6

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Reading is for learning but not for enjoyment.	3	4	4	14	15
2. Money spent on books is well spent.	10	10	14	1	5
3. There is nothing to be gained from reading books.	1	1	3	13	22
4. Books are a bore.	0	2	6	16	16
5. Reading is a good way to spend spare time.	21	12	3	2	2
6. Sharing books in class is a waste of time.	2	3	9	11	15
7. Reading turns me on.	9	6	16	3	6
8. Reading is only for grade grubbers.	2	0	3	7	28
9. Books aren't usually good enough to finish.	2	0	11	12	15
10. Reading is rewarding to me.	13	6	13	4	4
11. Reading becomes boring after about an hour.	4	6	10	11	9
12. Most books are too long and dull.	3	5	6	12	14
13. Free reading doesn't teach anything.	1	2	3	7	27

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
14. There should be more time for free reading during the school day.	17	7	10	3	3
15. There are many books which I hope to read.	25	6	7	1	1
16. Books should not be read except for class requirements.	1	0	3	6	30
17. Reading is something I can do without.	4	6	9	6	15
18. A certain amount of summer vacation should be set aside for reading.	10	7	13	2	8
19. Books make good presents.	14	10	8	3	5
20. Reading is dull.	6	1	8	7	18

RESPONSES TO THE ESTES ATTITUDE SCALE - DISABLED READERS: GRADES 3-6

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Reading is for learning but not for enjoyment.	8	8	6	12	6
2. Money spent on books is well spent.	12	15	6	5	2
3. There is nothing to be gained from reading books.	5	3	4	12	16
4. Books are a bore.	5	7	8	9	11
5. Reading is a good way to spend spare time.	22	7	5	3	3
6. Sharing books in class is a waste of time.	7	5	5	14	9
7. Reading turns me on.	14	5	10	2	9
8. Reading is only for grade grubbers.	5	5	5	10	15
9. Books aren't usually good enough to finish.	3	2	10	16	9
10. Reading is rewarding to me.	14	8	10	4	4
11. Reading becomes boring after about an hour.	10	11	5	5	9
12. Most books are too long and dull.	7	8	13	7	5
13. Free reading doesn't teach anything.	6	3	10	12	9

Statement	Strongly Atree	Agree	Un-decided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
14. There should be more time for free reading during the school day.	18	7	5	6	4
15. There are many books which I hope to read.	15	6	13	4	2
16. Books should not be read except for class requirements.	3	2	3	15	17
17. Reading is something I can do without.	4	4	10	13	9
18. A certain amount of summer vacation should be set aside for reading.	8	7	5	7	13
19. Books make good presents.	10	11	7	5	7
20. Reading is dull.	5	5	9	10	11